

## Court Information Release



United States District Court  
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division  
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

**Release Date:**  
May 5, 2021

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the Northern District of Illinois  
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### **Magistrate Judges Valdez and Cole Each Reappointed to Eight-Year Term**

CHICAGO, Ill. - Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer announced that effective today United States Magistrate Judges Maria Valdez and Jeffrey Cole were each reappointed to a new eight-year term of service as United States Magistrate Judges. Judges Valdez's and Cole's new terms each expire on May 5, 2029.

"The Northern District of Illinois is extremely fortunate to have such dedicated public servants as Judge Valdez and Judge Cole. Our hard-working magistrate judge bench is indispensable to this Court," said Chief Judge Pallmeyer.

In October 2020, Chief Judge Pallmeyer directed a Magistrate Judge Advisory Panel to review the service of Magistrate Judges Valdez and Cole and to make a report to the Court's district judges recommending whether each of these magistrate judges should be reappointed. After interviewing the district judges and reviewing submitted public comments, survey responses by members of the bar, and statistical data regarding caseload for each of the incumbent magistrate judges; the panel recommended reappointment for both of these judges.

The Panel was chaired by Hon. Arlander Keys (retired), and the members were as follows:

- Hon. Arlander Keys (retired), Chair
- Mr. Theodore T. Chung
- Mr. Jeremy C. Daniel
- Mr. Joseph M. Gagliardo
- Mr. Richard J. Gonzalez
- Ms. Vernee Green\*
- Ms. Eileen M. Letts
- Ms. Spiridoula (Litza) Mavrothalasitis
- Ms. Esther Franco-Payne\*
- Ms. Amanda Gabriela Penabad
- Mr. Stephen H. Pugh

- Mr. Nigel F. Telman
- Hon. Debra Walker

“Many thanks to this well-qualified and diverse panel of attorneys and citizens for undertaking this important task, without pay, on behalf of the people of the Northern District of Illinois,” said Chief Judge Pallmeyer.

United States Magistrate Judges perform a variety of duties for the court, including conducting preliminary proceedings in federal criminal cases and the trial and disposition of federal misdemeanor cases upon consent of the litigants. They conduct various pretrial matters and evidentiary proceedings upon referral from a district judge of the court and disposition of federal civil cases upon consent of the litigants.

\*By regulation, the Panel must include at least two non-lawyers.

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